



Highlights ...

- The TOTS implementation schedule is announced in today's newsletter. Check out today's front page article for more information.
- Clear up your mismatches and old unpaid claims **now**. Call Central Office for customer support at 877-41STEPS.
- If you attended TOTS training and do not remember or did not receive a username and/or password, contact Central Office at 877-41STEPS.
- If you have not attended a TOTS training, contact your regional Technical Assistance Team ASAP.

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WEEKLY UPDATE

November 7, 2008

TOTS UPDATE: IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED!!



Central Office, in collaboration with the TOTS design team and CBIS administration, have developed an implementation schedule for TOTS. The implementation schedule is tiered to allow service coordinators time to enter their existing caseloads into TOTS in advance of opening the system to direct service providers.

There are two pivotal dates in the TOTS implementation schedule. The first of those two dates is November 24, 2008. On November 24, 2008, the TOTS production system will go live.

On November 24, 2008, when the TOTS system goes live, Point Of Entry (POE) staff, Initial Service Coordinators (ISCs) and Primary Service Coordinators (PSCs) will begin entering their current caseloads into TOTS and POE staff and ISCs will begin entering all new referrals into TOTS.

POE staff, ISCs and PSCs will have from November 24, 2008 through December 14, 2008 to enter all children enrolled in or referred to First Steps on or after November 24, 2008 into TOTS.

The second pivotal date is December 15, 2008. On December 15, 2008 all providers will begin using the TOTS system for data management and claims processing.

With any major system change, there must be a period of time during which the old system and the new system run concurrently. While this requires double work for a period of time, it is necessary to assure the integrity of
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Technology-assisted Observation and Teaming Support system

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the data. Because First Steps *data* is, in part, claims data, it is imperative that there be a backup system in place until such time as Central Office can be assured that claims data and provider payments will not be compromised.

CBIS/CIMS and TOTS will run concurrently for a period of no less than 6 weeks, beginning on November 24, 2008. This means that users (POE staff, service coordinators and providers) will need to continue completing current CBIS/CIMS required activities in addition to completing TOTS activities.

Central Office and the TOTS design team will make every effort to minimize the period of time users will be required to use both the CBIS/CIMS and TOTS system. Users will be updated on weekly progress via the newsletter and will be notified when all work through CBIS/CIMS can be discontinued.

Claims

Services provided on or before December 14, 2008 will be billed to CBIS/CIMS unless the claims for those services meet the criteria described under [Billing Old Claims](#) discussed later in this article.

Services provided on or after December 15, 2008 will be billed both to CBIS/CIMS and through TOTS until data integrity is verified and then will be billed only through TOTS.

Remember, the systems need to run concurrently for a period of time to assure data integrity. This is why claims for services provided on or after December 15, 2008 must be billed both to CBIS/CIMS and through TOTS.

When users are notified that data integrity has been verified, it will no longer be necessary to submit claims for services on or after December 15, 2008 to CBIS/CIMS. Central Office and the TOTS design team will make every effort to hold the period of double data entry/claims processing to 6 weeks or less.

Billing Old Claims

The last CBIS cut-off date is January 21, 2009 and the last CIMS cut-off date is January 27, 2009. Every effort should be made to submit (or resolve mismatches for) claims for all dates of service on or before December 14, 2008 by one of the cut-off dates listed above.

Per the former and current Provider Agreement, claims for services must be submitted within 60 calendar days of service delivery.

In consideration of this clause, Central Office will accept claims after the cut-off dates listed above for dates of service on or after November 29, 2008 through December 14, 2008 and for dates of service prior to

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November 29, 2008 that were unbilled pending disposition by private insurance. However, claims that meet this criteria must be submitted to Central Office on paper using a CBIS-approved form either by mail to: 275 East Main Street, HS2W-C, Frankfort, KY, 40621-0001 or by fax at 502/564-8003 or 502/564-0329.

A Notable Exception

Central Office understands that primary service coordinators face a significant challenge in baring the responsibility of entering their entire caseload into TOTS without the assistance of clerical support. To support this effort, Central Office has received approval to allow a 4 unit (onsite rate) stipend for each case that is entered by a Primary Service Coordinator.

To receive this payment (and to assure that it is not applied to the primary service coordination unit limit), the claim for this service—and only this service—provided between the dates of November 24, 2008 and December 14, 2008 must be submitted through TOTS.

To accomplish this, service coordinators will:

1. complete all activities involved in the entry of a record into TOTS,
2. authorize their services (along with all other services on the IFSP) on the Planned Services page in TOTS,

3. document 1 hour of service (if it takes that long) on the Service Log page;
4. Enter the following note in the NOTES section of the Service Log: "Initial Case Entry" (quotation marks are not required); and
5. Submit the claim for this service via the Accounts Payable page in TOTS.

This service should NOT be billed to CBIS/CIMS and should be the ONLY service billed through TOTS prior to December 15, 2008.

Next Steps

In the coming week, Central Office will work to prepare guidance documents for service coordinators to assist in the entry of existing records into TOTS. Central Office will also work to finalize a guidance document for Primary Level Evaluators to assist with the entry of Evaluation/Assessment information into TOTS. When complete, these documents will be available on the First Steps website.

If you attended a TOTS training and do not remember or did not receive a TOTS username and password, please contact Central Office at 877-41STEPS. If you have not attended a TOTS training, contact your regional Technical Assistance Team ASAP.



Upcoming Events

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 11.10.08 | Carolina Curriculum Training in Berea—Course ID 1015131 (open for registration on Monday) |
| 11.10.08 | Caroline Curriculum Training in West Liberty—1014972 |
| 11.20.08 | HELP Training in West Liberty—1014974 |
| 12.01.08 | OSEP Data Verification Visit to Kentucky |
| 12.03.08 | Carolina Curriculum Training in West Liberty—1014973 |
| 12.10.08 | HELP Training in London—1015046 |
| 12.17.08 | HELP Training in West Liberty—1014975 |

Register for all First Steps trainings on TRAIN at www.train.org.



Visit the First Steps website at

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Highlights ...

- Service coordinators begin data entry on November 24th! See the article on this page for more information and refer to the November 7, 2008 First Steps Newsletter for the full implementation schedule.
- Clear up your mismatches and old unpaid claims **now**. Call Central Office for customer support at 877-41STEPS.
- If you attended TOTS training and do not remember or did not receive a username and/or password, contact Central Office at 877-41STEPS.
- If you have not attended a TOTS training, contact your regional Technical Assistance Team ASAP.
- PSCs and ISCs disregard "noncompliance" letter. See page 2 for details.

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WEEKLY UPDATE

November 14, 2008

TOTS UPDATE SERVICE COORDINATORS PREP FOR NOVEMBER 24TH

In case you missed it, the TOTS implementation schedule was announced in last week's newsletter. With that announcement, the countdown to the "live date" began.

Service coordinators will begin entering their current caseloads on November 24th. Central Office has developed a guide for ISCs and a guide for PSCs to facilitate the data entry process. These guides will be available next week on the First Steps website (fs.chfs.ky.gov), in addition to other helpful resources.

Service coordinators and all other First Steps providers will begin using TOTS on December 15, 2008. There will be a short time during which both the CBIS/CIMS and TOTS systems will run concurrently. While this means double work in the interim, it is necessary to assure data integrity and Central Office will do everything possible to minimize the time period needed for concurrent processes.

If you're a service coordinator, in preparation for November 24th, you should start preparing your files today. Make sure everything is in order. Do you have a copy of the initial IFSP and the current IFSP? You will need both for data entry. You've seen TOTS. You have an idea what information will be involved in data entry. Make sure your files are in order and documents are on hand to streamline your data entry processes.

If you're a service provider, in preparation for December 15th, you should make sure you have a TOTS Username and Password. If you can't access TOTS, you won't be able to document your services and you won't be able to bill. If you don't have a Username and Password that works, contact Central Office ASAP at 877-41STEPS.



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All service coordinators and providers, in preparation for December 15th, should review their current billing processes in consideration of the billing process in TOTS to assure that they are prepared to begin claims submission through TOTS on December 15, 2008 for all dates of service on or after December 15, 2008.

The regional Technical Assistance Teams are available for assistance and support. Please contact them if you have questions or concerns regarding your TOTS readiness.



CLAIMS INFORMATION

Last week's newsletter provided a good deal of information regarding where to send claims for specific dates of service. Please reference the November 7th newsletter for this information.

In preparation for the transition to TOTS, it will be very important for providers to resolve all claims for services provided on or before December 14, 2008

as quickly as possible and every effort should be made to resolve them by CBIS' last cut off date on January 21st (CIMS cut off January 27th).

Central Office staff are working diligently to assist providers with all claims issues. You can reach Central Office at 877-41STEPS or by e-mail at chfs.firststeps@ky.gov.

OOPS ...

Letters were mailed last week to providers who had not registered and attended an AEPS, Carolina Curriculum or HELP training through TRAIN or who had not submitted documentation of preservice or inservice training that would substitute.

PSC and ISC names were inadvertently included on this list of providers and as a result PSCs and ISCs received this letter.

Please accept our sincerest apologies. PSCs and ISCs

received this letter in error. Neither were required to attend Assessment training and this was an oversight on the part of Central Office. We regret the inconvenience this has caused.



Upcoming Events

- 11.20.08 HELP Training in West Liberty—1014974
- 11.24.08 Service Coordinators begin TOTS initial case entry
- 12.01.08 OSEP Data Verification Visit to Kentucky
- 12.03.08 Carolina Curriculum Training in West Liberty—1014973
- 12.10.08 HELP Training in London—1015046
- 12.15.08 TOTS goes live state wide!
- 12.17.08 HELP Training in West Liberty—1014975

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WEEKLY UPDATE

November 21, 2008

Highlights ...

- Service coordinators begin data entry on November 24th! See the article on this page for more information and refer to the November 7, 2008 First Steps Newsletter for the full implementation schedule.
- Clear up your mismatches and old unpaid claims **now**. Call Central Office for customer support at 877-41STEPS.
- If you attended TOTS training and do not remember or did not receive a username and/or password, contact Central Office at 877-41STEPS.
- If you have not attended a TOTS training, contact your regional Technical Assistance Team ASAP.
- If you're having a problem with TOTS, see the article on page 2 for assistance.

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TOTS UPDATE SERVICE COORDINATORS: INITIAL CASE ENTRY STARTS MONDAY

Initial service coordinators and primary service coordinators will begin to enter their caseloads into TOTS on Monday, November 24th. The initial case entry period will span November 24th through December 14th.

To assist ISCs and PSCs with initial case entry, guidance documents have been developed and are available on the First Steps website at fs.chfs.ky.gov. A new TOTS tab has been added to the left side of the Homepage.

As more guidance materials are developed, they will be posted to the TOTS page of the First Steps website. Guidance materials are often developed in response to questions from the field. Be sure to review that page frequently for updates.



TOTS BASICS

In preparation for TOTS implementation, we've received a request for a refresher on the basics.

TOTS is a web-based data management and billing system. In order to access TOTS, users will need a Windows Operating System on their computer and Internet Explorer version 5.5 or above.

TOTS has been tested on Microsoft Vista and no problems have been reported. At this time TOTS will not operate on an Apple/Mac.

Users can only access TOTS and enter data into TOTS while online. TOTS will not operate offline.

In order to access TOTS, users must have a Username and Password. These were assigned at TOTS training. If you attended training, but do not have a Username or Password, contact Central Office at 877-41STEPS. If you have not attended training, contact your regional TA Team ASAP.

PSC INITIAL CASE ENTRY TIPS

As we noted in the November 7th newsletter, PSCs will be allowed to bill through TOTS for up to 1 hour of service for initial case entry. To do this, following case entry, PSCs will enter a Service Log documenting up to 1 hour of time and will submit the claim for that single service via the Account

Payable screen/function in TOTS. The reimbursement rate for initial case entry is \$61/hr, which is the PSC rate for office-based services.

A guidance document detailing initial case entry procedures for PSCs has been posted to the First Steps website under the TOTS tab on the left.

UPDATE RE BACK-UP PSC

When TOTS is fully implemented, First Steps will no longer require the identification of a back-up PSC. Rather, the child's ISC will serve as the back-up PSC.

In order to assure that there is an authorization in place at any given time for an ISC, PSCs should include an authorization for Initial Service Coordination (1 time biannually for 10 hours) on every IFSP.

PSCs will not be required to invite the ISC to IFSP meetings or to send the ISC notices or other materials that may be distributed to the IFSP team. The purpose of the authorization is merely to assure that a billing mechanism is in place should the POE be required to complete a billable activity on behalf of a child or family when the PSC is unavailable or if the PSC cannot be located.

NEED TOTS HELP???

While in TOTS, it is not unlikely that you or someone you know will encounter a problem. While we hope this will be an infrequent occurrence, it's important to know how to handle the situation to avoid becoming really frustrated.

1. Proactively make sure you are working in an area free of heavy or sharp objects.
2. Do not take the Lord's or anyone in Central Office's name in vain.
3. Contact your TA Team. They may have encountered the problem already

and may have an answer.

4. If the TA Team cannot help, review the procedures for reporting a problem in the data system, which are located in the FAQ document, which can be accessed on the TOTS homepage (Q #2).
5. Click the "Support" button on the TOTS Homepage to send an e-mail with information regarding the problem to Central Office.
6. Give us an opportunity to investigate the problem and respond.

Upcoming Events

- 11.24.08 Service Coordinators begin TOTS initial case entry
- 12.01.08 OSEP Data Verification Visit to Kentucky
- 12.03.08 Carolina Curriculum Training in West Liberty—1014973
- 12.10.08 HELP Training in London—1015046
- 12.15.08 TOTS goes live state wide!
- 12.17.08 HELP Training in West Liberty—1014975

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Highlights ...

- Initial case entry in TOTS is well underway.
- Clear up your mismatches and old unpaid claims now. Call Central Office for customer support at 877-41STEPS.
- If you attended TOTS training and do not remember or did not receive a username and/or password, contact Central Office at 877-41STEPS.
- If you have not attended a TOTS training, contact your regional Technical Assistance Team ASAP.
- Happy Thanksgiving



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WEEKLY UPDATE

November 26, 2008

TOTS UPDATE INITIAL CASE ENTRY UNDERWAY

After 2 full days of data entry, we have more than 700 children in TOTS. Kudos to the POE staff, ISCs and PSCs who have been working so hard to get this job done.

So, how have things been going? PSCs report that data entry is taking longer than they anticipated it would. On the bright side, PSCs also report that their 5th and 6th record is going in more quickly than their 1st and 2nd.

We have had several questions about how to authorize initial and primary service coordination. We have developed a procedure document and that is posted on the First Steps website (fs.chfs.ky.gov). Go to the TOTS tab on the left side and scroll down to Guidance Materials at the bottom of the TOTS page.

You may have noticed that TOTS will require a Transition Outcome before it will allow a service coordinator to enter Planned Services (other than ISC, PSC and/or

evaluation/assessment) or finalize the IFSP. A couple of service coordinators have interpreted this to mean that the Transition Page needs to be complete. The Transition Page does not need to be complete. However, a Transition Outcome is required.

The reason that the system requires a Transition Outcome is that federal regulation requires that the IFSP contain "steps and services" related to transition. Sometimes with everything that goes on with an IFSP, it's difficult to remember small details. The system was designed to build in features that assist service coordinators in meeting federal and state regulatory requirements.

Independent Primary Service Coordinators have had some difficulty accessing the Account Payable page to process their claim for initial case
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entry. It is important for independent PSCs to remember that they will have a separate Administrative Agent login that must be used to process claims via the Account Payable screen. If you are a PSC that works for an agency, someone in your agency is designated as the Agency Administrator and will process claims for the agency via the Account Payable screen. If you are an independent PSC and you do not know your Agency Administrator login or if you work for an agency and no one at the agency seems to know the Agency Administrator

login, contact Central Office at 877-41STEPS.

Another feature of TOTS that we wanted to highlight is the unique child identifier. Currently POEs assign child identifiers that ultimately become the child's CBIS #. The unique identifier in TOTS is not assigned by the POE, it is automatically generated - eliminating the potential for duplication. It is also not related in any way to the child's current CBIS #. Therefore, if you contact your TA Team or Central Office regarding a specific child and you are asked for the TOTS ID, just know that the CBIS ID will not equate.

PRACTICE FOOD SAFETY THIS THANKSGIVING

Some service coordinators have asked whether Central Office maliciously scheduled the TOTS implementation over the Thanksgiving holiday? Though we did not, the Food Safety Tips we're sharing here will not only get you through Thanksgiving without sending you to the restroom, but may provide you with some unanticipated time for data entry.

1. Wash your hands. Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If you're using dial-up to access TOTS, you can dial-up, wash your hands and get back in time for your Homepage to load (maybe).
2. Sanitize work surfaces and utensils. To sanitize utensils, immerse for 30 seconds in clean, hot water at 170 degrees Fahrenheit. While heating the water

and sanitizing the utensils, you can re-enter the information you lost when your internet connection was dropped.

3. Thaw food properly. Allow 3—4 days to thaw a turkey. While the turkey is thawing, call Central Office and leave a message to either address a mismatch or obtain a TOTS Username and Password.
4. Remember the "two hour rule" - and no, that's not the minimum time it takes to enter a child's record into TOTS. The Two Hour Rule: do not leave perishable food items out at room temperature for more than two hours.

In all seriousness, we are thankful for each and every one of you and wish you a most peaceful Thanksgiving Day.

Upcoming Events

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| 12.01.08 | OSEP Data Verification Visit to Kentucky |
| 12.03.08 | Carolina Curriculum Training in West Liberty—1014973 |
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